

**SUMMARY OF THE
ON-SITE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
DECEMBER 13, 2000**

The On-site Assessment Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference on Wednesday, December 13, 2000, at 1:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST). The meeting was led by its chair, Mr. William Ingersoll of the U.S. Navy. A list of action items resulting from the meeting is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. *The purpose of the meeting was to address items of importance as summarized in the previously distributed meeting agenda.*

INTRODUCTION

After a welcome of participants, Mr. Ingersoll called the meeting to order. He then directed the committee's attention to the meeting agenda, which had been distributed electronically prior to the meeting.

APPENDIX A (BASIC TRAINING)

The committee identified as a significant question whether basic training for NELAC assessors will be incorporated into the NELAC Standard as a summary standard or as an in-depth standard. The committee discussed a draft summary standard prepared by Mr. Alfredo Sotomayor and distributed electronically prior to the meeting. It was suggested that Mr. Sotomayor's summary standard be included as an introduction to the outline prepared by Dr. Kenneth Jackson and Dr. Margo Hunt. Mr. Sotomayor noted that Section 3.6.1 of the NELAC Standard deals with areas of assessment. There was considerable subsequent discussion of content versus format. Although some committee members suggested that the committee make available as a model the course prepared by an EPA contractor with input from the On-site Assessment Committee, other committee members pointed out that the course cannot be used as a NELAC model unless approved by the Conference. At least one committee member expressed his commitment to make these course materials available as a reference to NELAC stakeholders. The committee noted that the course materials could be handled much like the Chapter 5 checklist.

It was suggested that the committee write a performance standard as to what defines an acceptable training course including a list of critical elements such as those bulleted in Mr. Sotomayor's summary standard. It was noted that the performance standard must be one against which the accrediting authorities can audit their training course. One possible organization of the critical elements was suggested by Mr. David Friedman as follows:

- < Pre-assessment components
 - 1. All material relevant to the assessment of laboratories as contained in the NELAC Standard
 - 2. How to plan an assessment
- < Assessment components

3. Interviewing techniques
 4. How to assess a Quality Systems program
 5. Report writing
 6. How to review data against the client's defined requirements
- < Assessor follow-up components
7. How to review a corrective action plan

A committee member questioned the addition of a mock assessment to basic assessor training, suggesting that the mock assessment would prove cost prohibitive and time prohibitive and that trainers cannot simulate laboratory conditions during the basic assessor training course. Although the mock assessment was championed by commenters at Sixth NELAC Interim Meeting (NELAC 6i), it was suggested that the mock assessment be reserved for Appendix B-1 as it applies to technical training for assessors.

After considerable discussion, Mr. Friedman indicated that he will distribute his proposed language for the performance standard to committee members via e-mail. The issue was tabled for further discussion and comment via e-mail.

APPENDIX C (STANDARD FOR THE ON-SITE ASSESSMENT SOP)

Mr. Ingersoll reminded the committee that there has been previous discussion of the need for each accrediting authority to have a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for on-site assessments. He asked for committee input as to whether it is necessary for the On-site Assessment Committee to develop a standard to contain the critical elements for an On-site Assessment SOP. In response it was suggested that the committee develop Appendix C to consist of critical elements required for the SOP. Again it was noted that Section 3.6.1 of the NELAC Standard deals with areas of assessment. It was noted that the Accrediting Authority Review Board (AARB) only assesses accrediting authority applications to Chapter 6 and that the committee must, therefore, provide a cross-link between Chapter 3 and Chapter 6. Mr. Ingersoll noted that he has received example SOPs from three accrediting authorities and indicated that he will distribute them to committee members via e-mail.

There was moderate subsequent discussion of assessor consistency issues. Several committee members suggested that assessor consistency is a training issue and that adequate Quality Systems training must be included in assessor training courses. The issue was tabled for further discussion and comment via e-mail.

DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL FINDINGS AFTER ISSUANCE OF REPORT

The committee discussed findings identified by the assessor after the issuance of the assessment report to the laboratory. It was noted that the laboratory has two opportunities to submit corrective action reports following the assessment. Committee members made a distinction between new findings and a continuance or off-shoot of an existing finding. Since the

committee's allotted meeting time was drawing to a close, the issue was tabled for further discussion and comment via e-mail.

CONCLUSION

The meeting was adjourned as the allotted time for the teleconference expired at 3:00 p.m. EST. The committee's next meeting will be on January 5, 2001, via teleconference.

ACTION ITEMS
ON-SITE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
DECEMBER 13, 2000

Item No.	Action	Responsible Member	Date to be Completed
1.	Committee will draft proposed language for a performance standard as to what defines an acceptable basic NELAC assessor training course, to include critical elements for the training course.	D. Friedman	01/15/01
2.	Committee will review three accrediting authority SOPs for on-site assessments and use these SOPs as a starting point for the development of Appendix C.	W. Ingersoll	01/15/01

**PARTICIPANTS
ON-SITE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
DECEMBER 13, 2000**

Name	Affiliation	Phone/Fax/E-mail
Ingersoll, William Chair	US Navy	T: 843-764-7337 F: 843-764-7360 E: IngersollWS@navsea.navy.mil
Buhl, Rosanna (absent)	Battelle Duxbury Operations	T: 781-952-5309 F: 781-934-2124 E: buhl@battelle.org
Dyer, Charles	NH Dept of Environmental Services	T: 603-271-2991 F: 603-271-2867 E: c_dyer@des.state.nh.us
Friedman, David	USEPA	T: 202-564-6662 F: 202-565-2432 E: friedman.david@epa.gov
Hall, Jack	Interpretive Consulting	T: 865-576-4138 F: E: scl3883@aol.com
Moore, Marlene	Advanced Systems, Inc.	T: 302-834-9796 F: 302-995-1086 E: mmoore@advancedsys.com
Sheibley, Richard (absent)	PA Dept of Env Protection	T: 717-787-4669 F: 717-783-1502 E: sheibley.richard@dep.state.pa.us
Sotomayor, Alfredo	WI Dept of Natural Resources	T: 608-226-9257 F: 608-267-5231 E: sotoma@dnr.state.wi.us
Uhlfelder, Mimi	Severn Trent Laboratories (STL Baltimore)	T: 410-771-4920 F: 410-771-4407 E: muhlfelder@stl-inc.com
Urrea, Santos (absent)	City of Austin	T: 512-927-4027 F: 512-927-4038 E: santos.urra@ci.austin.tx.us
Slayton, Joseph (Board Liaison) (absent)	USEPA	T: 410-305-2653 F: 410-305-3095 E: slayton.joe@epa.gov
Greene, Lisa (Contractor Support)	Research Triangle Institute	T: 919-541-7483 F: 919-541-7386 E: lcg@rti.org